



Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1895
17 May 1995

W E D N E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- + Security Council asks Secretary-General to arrange for full deployment of UNCRO after withdrawal of Croatian parties from zones of separation; demands parties withdraw all troops without delay and refrain from military actions that could escalate situation.
- + United States vetoes Security Council draft resolution calling on Government of Israel to rescind orders for expropriation of land in East Jerusalem.
- + Secretary-General says United Nations is counting on ECOWAS Summit in Abuja to give new impetus to Liberian peace process.
- + UNPROFOR reports heavy fighting in Sarajevo and clashes elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina; Special Representative Akashi meets with Croatian Serb leadership in Knin.
- + United Nations Command says effective communications between opposing forces on Korean peninsula are vital for maintenance of peace.
- + WHO issues advice on Ebola haemorrhagic fever for travellers returning from Zaire.
- + UNEP Executive Director says Programme plays key role as custodian of global environment.
- + James Moody of United States to be next Vice-President of International Fund for Agricultural Development.

* * *

The Security Council today requested the Secretary-General to make the necessary arrangements for the full deployment of the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), after the withdrawal of the troops of the Croatian parties from the zones of separation. It demanded

(more)

For information media—not an official record

that the parties complete the withdrawal of all troops without delay, and refrain from further violations of the zones. The Council took that action by unanimously adopting resolution 994 (1995).

The Council stressed the need for the early establishment of UNCRO's authority in accordance with its mandate. It demanded that the status and mandate of the Operation, and the safety and security of its personnel, be respected. The Council demanded also that the Croatian Government respect fully the rights of the Serb population in conformity with internationally recognized standards.

The Council demanded that the parties refrain from taking any further military measures or actions that could lead to the escalation of the situation. It warned that in the event of failure to comply with that demand, it would consider further steps to ensure such compliance. The Council requested the Secretary-General to report within two weeks on the implementation of resolution 994 (1995), including on the modalities for the implementation of UNCRO's mandate in Sector West.

* * *

The United States today vetoed a draft resolution by which the Security Council would have called on the Government of Israel to rescind orders for the expropriation of 53 hectares of land in East Jerusalem. The other fourteen members of the Council voted in favour of the draft.

Speaking after the vote, United States Permanent Representative Madeleine Albright said she had cast the veto reluctantly but without hesitation on an issue of principle. She stressed that the only path to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East was direct talks between the parties. The Council had sought to declare itself on a permanent status issue -- Jerusalem -- in violation of that principle. The Israeli expropriation notices were unhelpful to the peace process, but the draft would have compounded the problem by injecting the Council into the issue.

The veto was last exercised in December 1994, when the Russian Federation voted against a draft on the transport of goods between the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The United States last used the veto in May 1990.

* * *

The United Nations is counting on the Summit of Heads of State of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to give a new impetus to the Liberian peace process, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He made that comment in a message to the Summit, which is taking place in Abuja, Nigeria. The message was delivered on his behalf by Vladimir Petrovsky, Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva.

The Secretary-General said the conflict in Liberia had devastated the country and threatened the political and economic stability of its

(more)

neighbours. He stressed the need for general disarmament of the warring factions and the establishment of democratic institutions through genuine elections. The international community hoped the Summit would find a practical way to ensure compliance with the arms embargo imposed against Liberia by the Security Council. Neighbouring States should use their influence to ensure that the Liberian faction and political leaders adhered to the provisions of the Accra Agreement.

The United Nations Observer Mission for Liberia (UNOMIL) and the ECOWAS Monitoring Observer Group (ECOMOG) provided a unique example of cooperation between the United Nations and a regional organization in a peace-keeping operation, the Secretary-General went on to say. He assured the ECOWAS Heads of State of his full support for their efforts, and expressed encouragement for their objectives.

* * *

There was heavy fighting in Sarajevo again today, according to a United Nations spokesman. Bosnian Serb forces took three Government-held trenches on the high ground overlooking the city centre, and the fighting may have been spurred by Government attempts to regain that territory.

Last night, Bosnian Serb forces entered a United Nations weapons collection point and tried to prepare some mortars for firing, the spokesman said. Ukrainian soldiers resisted and some shots were fired, and the Bosnian Serbs left without firing the mortars. Meanwhile, there were clashes elsewhere in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Seventeen detonations were reported in the Bihac pocket this morning, probably in response to two Bosnian Government offensives there.

The situation in Croatia was stable, and there were withdrawals of Government forces in the zones of separation in some Sectors. However, the situation in Sector East was deteriorating continuously, with threats to United Nations personnel and property. As a result, United Nations civilian police abandoned another observation post in the Sector.

Special Representative Yasushi Akashi was in Knin today for talks with Croatian Serb leaders, the spokesman continued. Mr. Akashi reviewed the military situation in the zones of separation and discussed the future mandate of the United Nations Confidence Operation in Croatia (UNCRO).

* * *

The maintenance of effective communications between the opposing forces on the Korean peninsula is vital to preclude possible incidents and prevent the resumption of hostilities, according to the latest report by the United Nations Command (UNC). The report provides a synopsis of events in the area in 1994, and their impact on the Command's efforts in maintaining the Korean Armistice Agreement.

(more)

Both sides must fully cooperate to preserve the existing means of communication through the Military Armistice Commission (MAC), which was an integral part of the armistice, the report said. The United Nations Command would continue its efforts to implement the Armistice Agreement, and thereby contribute to a stable environment conducive to south-north dialogue and the ultimate goal of a durable peace on the Korean peninsula.

* * *

Given the unlikelihood of any patient with Ebola haemorrhagic fever leaving Zaire, the World Health Organization (WHO) has not recommended that special measures be instituted for passenger aircraft arriving from the country. Persons with Ebola become infectious for others only when they are extremely ill and already haemorrhaging. It is highly unlikely that such persons would try to travel on an international flight, and unlikely that they would be permitted to board if they did try.

However, WHO said that a very small number of individuals -- principally health-care workers and journalists -- would be returning to their home countries after contact with Ebola patients in Zaire. Unless those passengers were obviously ill, no travel restrictions were required, but they should inform health officials at their destination of their exposure history. If they fell ill during the 21-day incubation period for Ebola, they should seek immediate care and notify the authorities.

WHO advised other passengers leaving Zaire to notify a doctor immediately if an illness developed within three weeks of their departure date. In particular, any fever should be reported at once and the physician informed that the patient has travelled from Zaire. The incubation period for Ebola haemorrhagic fever is up to 21 days.

* * *

There is absolutely no doubt that the world needs the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as a custodian of the environment, according to UNEP Executive Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell. She made that comment as she opened the eighteenth session of the Programme's Governing Council in Nairobi, Kenya.

Ms. Dowdeswell went on to say that UNEP had to consolidate and rationalize its broad range of activities. Consequently, an integrated plan had been prepared to tackle four challenges: sustainable management and use of natural resources; sustainable production and consumption; a better environment for human health and well-being; and globalization and the environment.

Meanwhile, UNEP's Industry and Environment Office has issued two reports: "Environmental Management in the Electronic Industry" and "Cleaner Production in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Region".

* * *

(more)

The President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Fawzi Al-Sultan, has announced that James Moody will be the Fund's next Vice-President. Mr. Moody, a former United States Congressman, will assume his new post later this year.

Mr. Moody is currently Vice-President of the public policy consulting firm, Chamber Associates Inc., in Washington, D.C. He also serves on the Boards of Directors of the Council on Foreign Relations and the United States Committee for Refugees, and is a visiting professor at the Medical College of Wisconsin.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★